NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM

All children must attend school from the age of six to 16 years. Most children start school as soon as they turn five and many leave when they reach 17 or 18 years of age.

THERE ARE FIVE LEVELS OF EDUCATION:

- **early childhood**, ages 1–4
- **primary**, ranges from Years 1–6, ages 5–10
- **intermediate**, Years 7–8, ages 10–13
- **secondary**, Years 9–13, ages 13–19
- **tertiary**, age 18+

For more information about the school system, visit the ‘Our education system’ section on the Ministry of Education website, minedu.govt.nz or phone 463 8000.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

For children up to five years of age, early childhood education is available from a range of providers, including kindergartens, play centres, childcare centres, home-based networks, play groups and Te Kohanga Reo (Māori language nests).

It is best to ask for prices, as charges vary. Children aged three and four enrolled in centre-led early childhood centres qualify for free early childhood education for up to 20 hours a week.

To find out more about early childhood education, visit ece.govt.nz or phone 463 8000. A list of ECE providers in Wellington is available from the website yellowpages.co.nz – type in ‘childcare and education’.

PRIMARY, INTERMEDIATE AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

If you have a work visa and paid employment, or New Zealand Permanent Residency status, then your children can get free education through the government-funded school system. Alternatively, you may choose to send your children to an independent or private school where you will have to pay fees.

At primary, intermediate and secondary level there is a choice between single sex, co-educational, public and private schools.

The school year is divided into four terms which begin in late January and end in late November for secondary schools, and mid-December for primary schools. For the exact term dates visit minedu.govt.nz

To avoid overcrowding, some schools have an enrolment zone which gives priority to children living there. Check to see whether a school has an enrolment zone, and whether you live in it. You can find out more about a school by asking for an information brochure, and you could also ask to visit and meet with the principal and staff.

ENROLLING A CHILD IN A SCHOOL

Telephone the school of your choice and make an appointment to speak with the principal. At the appointment, you may want to share information about your child and ask about the staff who are likely to be teaching your child and who you should talk to regularly about your child’s progress. If you have religious or cultural beliefs — this is the time to explain them so the school is aware of any requirements.

You will need to explain who is allowed to collect your children from school and who to contact in case of illness or an accident. The school will treat this as private information that they do not give to others.

You can find out the list of schools in Wellington at the website tki.org.nz/schools/wellington-region

OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE

The out-of-school care and recreational programmes (OSCAR) are before-school, after-school and school holiday programmes — including camps — for children aged five to 14. They are recreation-based programmes that aim to meet children’s needs in their out-of-school hours in a safe and fun way.

The government may help to pay some of the fees. Check if your child qualifies at the website workandincome.govt.nz or phone 0800 559 009.
WELLINGTON EDUCATION

► SECONDARY SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the national public examination system in secondary schools and usually is taken from Year 11 onwards
- Year 11  NCEA level 1 (age 15)
- Year 12  NCEA level 2 (age 16)
- Year 13  NCEA level 3 (age 17)

High-performing students in Year 13 can take the New Zealand Scholarship qualification. For more information about NCEA and this qualification visit nzqa.govt.nz/ncea

► SCHOOL QUALITY STANDARDS

The Education Review Office reviews the quality of education in all New Zealand schools every three to four years, and reviews early childhood centres every four to five years. For more information visit the Education Review Office website, ero.govt.nz

TERTIARY EDUCATION

► UNIVERSITIES

All university students must be able to communicate in English, and most universities require a level of English competence as an entry requirement. International students must pay the full rate of tuition fees.

Three of New Zealand’s eight universities have campuses in Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Massey University and the Otago Medical School from Dunedin which has a department at Wellington Hospital.

Contact details are:
- Victoria University of Wellington  – phone 0800 842 867 or visit victoria.ac.nz
- Massey University  – phone 0800 627 739 or visit massey.ac.nz
- Otago Medical School  – phone 385 5541 or visit otago.ac.nz/wellington

► OTHER TERTIARY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

There are many other tertiary education providers in Wellington that offer degrees, diplomas and certificates in vocational, technical, and professional fields. Some offer distance learning.

Contact them directly for more information about their courses and enrolment, and for information on registered training organisations in Wellington, check the New Zealand Qualification Authority’s website nzqa.govt.nz or phone 0800 697 296.

HELP WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Help to improve your English is available through English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes at most universities and tertiary institutions.

For a list of English language institutions available in Wellington, visit tec.govt.nz or phone 0800 601 301. As well, the ESOL Assessment and Access Service in Wellington City can provide free specialist advice about the best ESOL programme to suit your needs. Visit their website mclass.org.nz or phone 384 3693. As well, some services have free or low-cost English classes in Wellington City, including:
- English Language Partners Wellington, englishlanguage.org.nz
- Multicultural Learning and Support Service (MCLaSS), mclass.org.nz
- Adult community education classes  – these programmes offer a range of courses, including ESOL. Some courses take place at night or on weekends. Providers include:
- Victoria University of Wellington  – phone 463 5600 or visit victoria.ac.nz
- Wellington High School  – phone 385 8919 or visit cecwellington.ac.nz
- Massey University  – phone 801 5799 extn 63191 or visit massey.ac.nz
- English Teaching College  – phone 385 0066 or visit etc.ac.nz

Supported by

Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Poneke